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Tuesday, 27 November 2007, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Natalegawa	(Indonesia)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Congo	Mr. Biabaroh-Iboro
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Tincopa
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Slovakia	Mr. Matulay
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2007/653)

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07-61468 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2007/653)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Sudan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite the representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mohamad (Sudan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39, of the provisional rules of procedure, to Mr. Jan Eliasson, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Darfur.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Eliasson to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Guéhenno to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, document S/2007/653.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Jan Eliasson, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Darfur, and Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

I now give the floor to Mr. Eliasson.

Mr. Eliasson: I thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to brief the Council on the Darfur peace process. Let me begin by giving on overall assessment of the situation in Darfur. I will then outline the latest developments and the proposed way forward.

When the Secretary-General briefed the Council on 24 October, it will be recalled that he expressed serious concern about the overall security and humanitarian situation in Darfur, as well as the continuous difficulties with the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). He also indicated his preoccupation with the frictions between the movements, as well as between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the National Congress Party (NCP) within the Government of National Unity of the Sudan and their effects on the Darfur political process.

It is, to begin with, important to recognize that those issues are interrelated. Slow progress in one aspect of our collective response to the Darfur crisis impacts the progress in other areas. The political process, the peacekeeping operation and the humanitarian efforts are mutually reinforcing.

There is continued reason to be concerned by the present security and humanitarian situation, which clearly affects the political process. In October alone, more than 30,000 civilians were displaced by clashes between Government forces and non-signatories, as well as among Darfur movements themselves, bringing the total number of the displaced this year to almost 280,000 persons. Tragically, seven Sudanese humanitarian workers were killed in Darfur in October — the highest monthly casualties since July 2006. Fighting over the past two days in Chad

underlines the volatility of the situation in the region. All those developments reinforce the urgency of finding a viable peace settlement.

Inter-tribal conflicts over land and water resources continue and persist. There is increasing concern of Arab unrest and militancy, as well as of a spillover of the conflict into Kordofan. Tensions in internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps are growing. The raids of Government forces into camps, as well as incidents in and around the camps, have led to loss of life, destruction of shelters and violations of human rights. Humanitarian access continues to be impeded. The recent forced relocation of IDPs in South Darfur is particularly worrisome. Those developments on the ground do not foster the atmosphere of safety, mutual trust and respect so sorely needed in Darfur. Let us recall that the Government of the Sudan has the primary responsibility for upholding security, justice and respect for international law, including through cooperation with the International Criminal Court.

Exactly one month ago, on 27 October, the Darfur peace talks were launched in Sirte, Libya, under the auspices of the African Union (AU) and the United Nations and chaired by AU Special Envoy Salim Ahmed Salim and me. They were attended by the Government of the Sudan and representatives of Darfurian movements, the regional partners Chad, Egypt, Eritrea and Libya — also as host country — and of the international community, as well as by civil society, traditional and women's groups representatives from Darfur.

The tone of the interventions at the Sirte talks was positive and constructive. Delegates expressed support for the AU-United Nations-led process and made commitments to reach a political settlement. The participation of representatives of civil society was important, reminding us that addressing the plight of the people of Darfur and the conflict's root causes must be at the centre of our efforts. The people of Darfur demand and strongly hope for protection and security, compensation and reparation, safe and voluntary return home, as well as recovery and development projects.

There was widespread recognition in Sirte that there is no military solution to the conflict in Darfur. In that context, Mr. Salim and I welcomed the Government of the Sudan's announcement of a unilateral cessation of hostilities on the first day of the talks. Despite our request that it be upheld, the ceasefire was reportedly broken. As Council members are aware, we had hoped to secure a similar commitment from all parties. In fact, that was one of the reasons why we had issued inclusive invitations to the opening session. However, the movements were not prepared to reciprocate that commitment due to existing divisions, the absence of some key personalities and, as they stated, a lack of trust in the intentions of the Government of the Sudan.

In our meetings with the parties, Mr. Salim and I emphasized the importance of creating an environment conducive to political talks. We noted the need for confidence-building measures that could have a concrete impact on the security and welfare of the population in Darfur, in particular in the camps, where the situation is volatile. We cautioned against any action, military or political, that could undermine the trust between the parties and within the population of Darfur.

We also made it clear to the Government of the Sudan that the involvement of civil society and other stakeholders is critical and that we expected all efforts to be made to facilitate the dialogue. Regrettably, out of the 25 civil society representatives we had invited to the opening session in Sirte, only 13 were provided with the possibility to travel.

We strongly made the point to the movements that they should not delay their work on reaching agreement on common positions and on a joint delegation to the substantive talks while they were working on their unification as movements.

As the Council is aware, some of the leading personalities of the Darfurian movements did not come to Sirte. Some requested additional time for unifying activities and for the preparation of positions. Others expressed reservations with regard to the personalities invited and to the venue for the talks. Nevertheless, we must make a distinction, I believe, between those who did not come to Sirte but are still engaged in the peace process, on the one hand, and those who have rejected the talks or presented unrealistic preconditions for them, on the other. All parties must be aware that undermining the peace process comes at a price.

Of course, there is reason to be disappointed that some key personalities did not attend the opening of the talks in Sirte. Questions have been raised about whether, for that reason, the talks should have been postponed. Events of the past several months have

clearly shown, in my view, that there is nothing to gain from delays. A gradual deterioration in the political, security and humanitarian field has been evident since the summer. The launch of the talks provided a catalyst for the movements to intensify their restructuring work. It was also essential to launch the talks simultaneously with the start of the UNAMID deployment. Let us also recall that this, after all, was the first time that parties to the conflict had met face-to-face since the Darfur Peace Agreement was signed in May 2006.

The Darfur peace process should now be considered irreversible. There is no way back. It is critical to stay the course and maintain the political momentum.

It is important to note that invitations to Sirte were issued on an individual and inclusive basis for the opening session only. We had originally envisaged that the weeks following the opening would be devoted to workshops and further preparations among the movements, not least to choose their negotiation teams. Because of the ongoing consultations among them in Darfur and Juba, in the Sudan, we have had to readjust our workplan.

First of all, in an effort to intensify high-level contacts with the movements, we are now refocusing much of our work on Darfur and Juba. Secondly, we are working hard on the selection of representatives of civil society and other stakeholders to take part in the continued political process. Thirdly, we are coordinating even more closely with our regional partners.

For the African Union and United Nations to be able to start the workshops and issue the invitations to the substantive talks, the movements need to agree on common positions and form negotiation teams for the talks.

Some of the developments in Juba over the past few weeks have been encouraging in that respect. The SPLM has assisted the movements to coalesce around two major groups — the 11 different faction representatives working to reconstitute the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and five factions which have agreed to work together under one umbrella in what is called the new United Resistance Front (URF). Those two groups have pledged to coordinate their positions on the issues for the talks. The movements now intend to return to Darfur to connect with field commanders and other factions on the ground in order to solidify their alliance.

In addition to those groups, there are ongoing efforts within SLM/Unity in Darfur to restructure and coordinate positions. As a result of those efforts, we hope to soon see two or three groups of movements instead of the many factions we have worked with during the past year.

These are positive developments, which, however, should be welcomed with a dose of caution. Unification efforts remain fragile. Loose coalitions and alliances have, in the past, failed due to competition over leadership. Thus far, the movements have mainly been speaking about unification and reorganization. They have not discussed, in depth, substantive issues or negotiation teams. We hope that they will use the coming weeks to do so. Mr. Salim and I are appreciative of the initiative by the SPLM to support the movements' unification efforts, but it is important to state again that the movements should stay focused on preparing for the negotiations. The more ambitious objective of reaching full unification may cause further delays in the peace process.

In that respect, movements may need further facilitation by the African Union and United Nations Mediation. Should they request it, we would be prepared, in contact with our regional partners, to host a meeting for the movements as soon as possible. Such an Arusha-style meeting — I am referring to the meeting held in August in Arusha, Tanzania — could provide them with an opportunity to crystallize their positions, nominate their teams and finalize their preparations for the talks to start soon thereafter.

We will also use the next few weeks to ensure that the voices of the people of Darfur are channelled into the political process. We are working closely with civil society, traditional leaders and Arab and women's groups to secure nominations to form an advisory council. Such an advisory council could be a primary channel of consultations between civil society and the Mediation. Here, the internally displaced persons and refugees are an important constituency which should be included in any consultation process. Access to them is, however, being obstructed by intimidation in different forms, also from within one of the movements. The IDPs and refugees were not present in Sirte. We are working intensely to ensure that they are informed of the developments in the political process.

It is also important that the Arab population of Darfur be represented as part of civil society and within movement coalitions.

The Secretary-General warned in his statement to the Council in October of the lack of preparedness and cohesion inside the movements. I gave a similar picture, as members may recall, of continuing fragmentation when I briefed the Council in June. Most movements remain sceptical about the Government's claim of renouncing the military solution. Some movements also continue to be engaged in hostilities.

Other movements have insisted that the delegation of the Government of the Sudan be one of national unity, with SPLM and Minni Minnawi represented. The tensions between SPLM and NCP and the stand-off between Minnawi and the NCP on the issue of Minnawi's demand for separate representation at the talks add to the difficulties now. All efforts must be made to ensure that these issues are resolved and that progress is achieved on implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. It is also important for the political process that UNAMID deployment proceed on schedule.

Taking all those factors into account, Mr. Salim and I believe that we have to allow reasonable time for the composition of the Government delegation and for the movements to finalize their preparations for the talks. We should not risk the credibility of this process by rushing to convene substantive talks if we do not have a critical mass of participants ready for them. At the same time, we must maintain the momentum through continuous engagement with the movements and with the Government of the Sudan and remind them of their commitments to the African Union and the United Nations and of their obligations to the people of Darfur. Protracted delays in reaching internal consensus on the part of the Government and the movements may otherwise become serious impediments to the start of substantive negotiations on Darfur.

Over the next two weeks, Mr. Salim and I, together with our chief mediators, will be in close contact with the parties. We plan to meet with our regional partners on 4 December in Egypt to determine the course ahead: time frames for a possible Arusha-style meeting, as I just mentioned, the workshops and substantive talks. The role of the countries of the region is critical, as was evident at the regional meeting that Mr. Salim and I convened in Eritrea on 14 November. After the meeting in Egypt, I am planning to proceed to the Sudan to visit the movements in the field and movement leaders and meet with other stakeholders.

To conclude, I believe we should all remain confident of the potential of this process to bring about a peace agreement for Darfur. At the same time, we have to recognize that the atmosphere now is less positive than it was last summer at the time of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1769 (2007) and the successful Arusha consultations. Factors beyond our control have, undoubtedly, impeded the process.

Mr. Salim and I will continue to do our utmost to facilitate the peace process. We will, however, only be able to make progress if the parties show seriousness, political will and a focused commitment to peace. When the substantive talks begin, the parties should come prepared to make the compromises necessary to reach a just and lasting solution. The continued support of the international community, in particular the Security Council, for our efforts is critical, as demonstrated by the impact of Council resolution 1769 (2007). While we now urge the parties to intensify their preparations for the talks, we must not allow them to derail the process. We — as much as they — must keep the fate of the people of Darfur at the centre of our attention.

The President: I thank Mr. Eliasson for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Guéhenno.

Mr. Guéhenno (*spoke in French*): We are at a crossroads in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) deployment process. Many of the issues are familiar, and they continue to be extremely sensitive. First among them is of course the security and humanitarian situation on the ground, which remains very worrying, as was just described by Mr. Eliasson. Joint Special Representative Adada and Force Commander General Agwai are involved in intensive discussions with the Government to address the situation in the Kalma camp. It is critical to ensure that the disarmament of that camp complies with international humanitarian standards since it will set a precedent for securing other camps in Darfur. Secondly, the deployment of UNAMID is facing fundamental challenges in the areas of force

generation, the final identification of the force composition and a number of bureaucratic impediments.

I would like to focus my remarks today on the ongoing actions to address these issues and to highlight the implications of any failure to address them in a timely fashion. I would also like to apprise the Council of the challenges we must address in our discussions with the Government of the Sudan on the negotiations of the UNAMID status-of-forces agreement.

A summary of preparations for the transfer of authority from the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) to UNAMID was presented in the Secretary-General's most recent monthly report (S/2007/653), which reflects our efforts in a number of areas, including the establishment of initial operating capability for UNAMID headquarters, completion of staffing for the Interim Force and Police Headquarters, the shift to a three-sector structure, the appointment and deployment of senior leadership and the ongoing logistical arrangements required to support UNAMID personnel.

Since the report was submitted, the first elements of the heavy support package for AMIS have been deployed to Darfur: the 140-strong Formed Police Unit from Bangladesh arrived in Nyala on 21 November and an advance party of 135 personnel from the Chinese engineering unit arrived in Nyala on 24 November. These deployments are encouraging and we expect the advance party of a second Formed Police Unit from Nepal to arrive in the mission area on 15 December, followed by its main body on 7 January. Approximately 100 individual police officers will arrive in December, in addition to the 56 already deployed.

We also expect the Police Commissioner and one of his Deputies, the Military Chief of Staff of General Agwai, all Sector Commanders and Deputy Sector Commanders, the Deputy Chief of the Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC), as well as some 75 per cent of all staff officer positions serving in the Force and Sector headquarters to be deployed by the end of December. Finally, and pending the provision of the final load lists that accompany the deployments, including logistics and airlift preparations, the deployment of the following heavy support package units is scheduled to commence in January 2008: the main body of the Chinese engineering unit, the Multi-Role Logistics Unit and Sector Reserve Company from Bangladesh and the Level II hospital from Nigeria.

(*spoke in English*)

Nevertheless, we are facing serious gaps in UNAMID force requirements in spite of our best efforts, including by the Secretary-General himself. Five weeks before the transfer of authority, UNAMID is still short of critical mobility capabilities: one heavy and one medium transport unit, three military utility aviation units — that is 18 helicopters — and one light tactical helicopter unit — that is six helicopters. In addition, as a result of pre-deployment visits, pledges for one reconnaissance company were withdrawn; consequently, the gap in capability has grown since my last briefing.

If no appropriate offers for those missing units are identified by early 2008, it may become necessary to revert to the Council to consider options to mitigate the lack of air mobility. That may require an increase in troops. But more troops will not replace military aviation, and they would also require more logistic support, more land and more water and would likely not appear in Darfur until late 2008. Another suboptimal last-resort measure would be — if I may use the word — to "borrow" those capabilities from other missions. While we are taking all options into account in making contingency plans, it is important to stress that our initial plans reflected minimum requirements and do not allow for such flexibility.

As the Council is aware, it has been our highest priority to assemble a force which is able to implement the mission's mandate and in so doing to protect the people of Darfur and indeed to protect itself. In identifying troop contributors we have therefore focused on ensuring that they have the required capabilities and are able to deploy in a timely manner. We have also sought to assemble a balanced force, which would unquestionably meet the African character criterion referred to in resolution 1769 (2007) and whose impartiality would be beyond reproach, whether it is from the rebels' perspective or that of the Government of the Sudan.

From among the pledges we have received, the African Union and the United Nations put together a list in accordance with those priorities and transmitted it to the Government of the Sudan on 2 October. We believe that the troop-contributing countries which have been identified and the package transmitted to the

Government of the Sudan are, under the political constraints we have had to address, best positioned to undertake the arduous peacekeeping work which lies ahead in Darfur.

While we have not received a direct response, the Government has made clear, and made public, its reluctance to accept certain non-African units in the force, citing concerns regarding the maintenance of public perceptions of the African character of the force as well as an inability to provide security guarantees to certain non-African elements. Three units in particular have been singled out: the infantry battalion from Thailand, the force reserve/special forces and sector reserve companies from Nepal and the Nordic engineering company.

As I informed the Council in my briefing on 14 November, there are no alternatives for the inclusion of the non-African units. First, the Thai battalion — well-trained and fully equipped — was selected based on its readiness to deploy to Darfur in early January. It will be essential for UNAMID to have an effective deterrent and self-defence capacity as close to the transfer of authority as possible. On that basis, the battalion must absolutely be retained. Secondly, Nepal is the only country to have offered a special forces company for the overall UNAMID force reserve, a vital element which allows a robust reserve response to threats against the mission. The Haskanita incident highlights that need.

And finally, the Nordic offer of a composite engineering unit gives UNAMID critical capabilities to set up the mission logistically and enable other units to come in, particularly those with less than ideal self-sustainability. We had planned for the unit to deploy as early as possible in January, and, once it provides this early impact, it will be drawn down over the latter part of 2008. It is a surge-enabling capacity to launch the mission effectively. Its exclusion would present a serious loss for UNAMID's ability to establish and consolidate its presence quickly in an area as vast as Darfur.

That said, together with the African Union, we have made a sincere effort to address the Sudanese concerns related to the perception of the force.

Following my discussions with the Government, a special task force, led by the DPKO Military Adviser, travelled to Cairo and Addis Ababa from 19 to 22 November to ascertain the possibility of accelerating the deployment of the Egyptian and Ethiopian battalions selected for UNAMID. We were pleased to receive the confirmation of the Governments of Egypt and Ethiopia as to the availability and readiness of their respective battalions to deploy as early as possible following the transfer of authority, beginning with the deployment of advance elements in January 2008. Reconnaissance operations by both countries will take place in the first half of December: Ethiopia from 1 to 6 December, Egypt from 8 to 13 December. Their actual deployment, however, will also require accelerated logistics and airlift preparations.

In the meantime, all other ongoing preparations continue, including pre-deployment visits. As Council members are aware, it is critical that, once identified, all troop-contributing countries initiate preparations for deployment as rapidly as possible. Every delay or suspension of pre-deployment activity will have a direct and negative impact on the readiness of troops to deploy to UNAMID in the early stages of 2008.

It is in that context that we are deeply concerned by public remarks being made by Sudanese Government officials calling into question the African Union-United Nations approach in finalizing force composition. Those remarks, particularly in the absence of a formal response from the Government on this issue, create serious uncertainty with regard to the Government's commitment to the deployment of UNAMID.

The speedy and effective deployment of UNAMID also depends on the Government's cooperation with regard to facilitating the acquisition of land and flight operations rights for United Nations aircraft. Joint Special Representative Adada has informed us that he has still not been able to obtain the authorization of the Sudanese Civil Aviation Authority for the deployment of six helicopters to El Fasher. UNAMID has also not been given permission to fly at night. But the mandate to protect civilians does not end at sunset. The mission has still not received land in El Geneina and Zalingei, and the Government has impounded UNAMID communications equipment at the El Fasher airport for weeks. The land issue is particularly critical, since units are beginning to deploy. If the Government does not immediately give us the land we need, we will have to hold back some units. Moreover, local authorities in El Obeid have asked UNAMID to stop using the El Obeid logistics

base because "it was created to serve the United Nations Mission in the Sudan".

As the Council is also aware, we are in the process of negotiating a status-of-forces agreement with the Sudan. On 2 November, we transmitted to the Government a draft agreement that had been agreed with the African Union and was based on the model status-of-forces agreement approved by the General Assembly. On 13 November, we received an alternative text from the Government. The Government's text includes proposals that, our experience has shown us, would make it impossible for the mission to operate, in particular with regard to freedom of movement of personnel and the integrity of its communications.

While this is not the forum for a detailed discussion of the document, it is useful to note that the Sudanese text includes a provision for the Government to "temporarily disable the communications network" in case of security operations by the Government in exercise of its sovereign rights. There is also a proposal requiring UNAMID to provide "advance notification to the Government for all staff, troop and asset movements related to UNAMID". The Council will appreciate what such provisions would do to the ability of a force commander to respond to an unforeseen crisis that required rapid and robust action in defence of civilians.

We were also surprised to see remarks in the media in which the Sudanese Government revisited the question of UNAMID accoutrement. That issue was discussed with the Sudanese Foreign Minister when the Council visited the Sudan in June 2006, with the clear request that the Mission's accoutrement would be determined on the basis of the 5 June 2007 joint AU-UN report on the Hybrid Operation. On that basis, we have been making preparations for United Nations personnel to wear a blue beret with a United Nations insignia and an AU patch on their sleeve to reflect the joint nature of the operation. There are privileges and immunities associated with the wearing of the blue beret and United Nations insignia that are simply non-negotiable to troop-contributing countries.

In order to overcome the current uncertainty, the Secretary-General is discussing with Chairperson Konaré how to further engage the Sudanese authorities at the strategic level. Extensive and detailed technical explanations have been provided repeatedly, including at a high level, to the Government of the Sudan, and the remaining — and fundamental — differences cannot be attributed to a lack of consultations. That is why the Secretary-General is also reiterating his appeal to Council members and key regional leaders to make additional concerted efforts to persuade the Sudanese authorities to support the deployment of an effective UNAMID force. Ultimately, a strategic decision on the part of the Government of the Sudan is necessary if we are to achieve our common goal: peace and security in Darfur and, indeed, in all of the Sudan.

Should the anticipated discussions fail to clear the path for the deployment of an effective force, the international community will be confronted with hard choices: do we move ahead with the deployment of a force that will not make a difference, that will not have the capability to defend itself and that carries the risk of humiliation of the Security Council and the United Nations and tragic failure for the people of Darfur?

Five months ago in Khartoum, the Council received President Bashir's agreement on African Union-United Nations plans for a peacekeeping operation in Darfur without preconditions. During the Secretary-General's visit to the Sudan in September, President Bashir gave him personal assurances that his Government would facilitate the deployment of UNAMID. Over the past few weeks, the Government's reluctance to facilitate the practical preparations for UNAMID, as well as the public statements made by its senior officials, call that commitment into question. The Government of the Sudan has an important responsibility to positively influence the public's attitudes towards UNAMID and the United Nations. We also believe that troop contributors require and deserve unequivocal assurances that their efforts to contribute to the implementation of resolution 1769 (2007) are welcome.

Finally, in a new and disturbing development, two rebel movements, the Justice and Equality Movement and a grouping of factions of the Sudan Liberation Army, have made threats against the Chinese elements of the peacekeeping force. That is totally unacceptable, and it is being addressed with the utmost seriousness by the Secretariat and by the African Union Mission in the Sudan, which will be dedicating additional force protection to the area where the Chinese unit is deployed.

Our ability to end the suffering in Darfur is, indeed, ultimately linked to the political process. While

the African Union and the United Nations will continue to press the parties to make progress in their negotiations, our efforts to deploy a capable peacekeeping operation that is able to fulfil its mandate and to help the parties implement the outcome of their negotiations require the Security Council's continued engagement, as well as the active support of the Government of the Sudan.

The President: I thank Mr. Guéhenno for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Mohamad (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a great pleasure and honour for the delegation of the Sudan to see you, Sir, presiding over this important Security Council meeting. We highly appreciate the many contributions and activities of the Indonesian presidency of the Council. We recall that your friendly country was among the first to understand the problems and concerns of the African continent when it hosted the historic Bandung Conference more than 50 years ago. That gathering sought to diagnose the problems of the newly independent continent and to support its march towards national unity, settlement of disputes and reconstruction through cooperation and solidarity.

Therefore, your friendly country is particularly qualified to preside over this meeting about peace in Darfur and to guide it towards a result that will help support the peace and stability we all desire.

Allow me also to send my greetings through you to Mr. Jan Eliasson, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the political process in Darfur. I also salute his counterpart, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Special Envoy of the African Union. We always appreciate their continuous efforts to guarantee the success of the political process in reaching a sustainable peace for all in Darfur. We also appreciate the efforts of Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno in the question of peacekeeping.

It is probably an auspicious sign that this meeting coincides with the anniversary of the Addis Ababa meeting, which took place on 16 November 2006. That consultative, high-level meeting laid the foundation for a strong and effective partnership based on dialogue and transparency between the Government of the Sudan and the African Union and the United Nations regarding the question of Darfur. The understandings reached there were based on full respect for the sovereignty of the Sudan and its unity, territorial integrity and political independence. That meeting was successful, contrary to previous attempts that were characterized by unilateralism and a lack of realism.

The Addis Ababa meeting drew a clear and agreed road map for the various aspects of the question of Darfur. Primary among the points of agreement was to accord priority to a political settlement, protected and supported by a hybrid peacekeeping operation with an African character and also supported by humanitarian assistance and support for those in need. Additionally, the development and recovery track was reaffirmed at the second high-level meeting on Darfur, held in New York in the margins of the General Assembly session, September 2007. That track covered the same concepts that were also included in Security Council resolution 1769 (2007). Our country has reaffirmed its full commitment to that resolution.

All those elements — including the Addis Ababa meeting and the subsequent meetings of the African Union Peace and Security Council, as well as the relevant Security Council resolutions and presidential statements — underscore that the problem of Darfur can be resolved only through a political settlement. The Darfur Peace Agreement was the foundation for that settlement and no party can be allowed to abort that Agreement or reopen it for negotiations. Those elements have also stressed that the political settlement must be guided by the United Nations and the African Union, and that opposition to the Darfur Peace Agreement cannot be a gateway to continued military activities against the Agreement. They all also made it clear that the international community was ready to punish those who hinder the peace process.

Negotiations began on 27 October 2007 at Sirte, Libya, hosted generously by the sisterly Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The peace negotiations started with valuable efforts and initiatives from the Special Envoys of the United Nations and the African Union, Mr. Jan Eliasson and Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim. We take this opportunity to express our appreciation and gratitude to Mr. Eliasson, who just briefed the Council about developments on the question of peace in Darfur.

We also want to point out that my Government takes the Sirte meetings very seriously. We sent a complete high-level delegation chaired by Mr. Nafie Ali Nafie, assistant to the President of the Sudanese

Republic. The Government's commitment towards the negotiations was not limited to sending the high-level delegation; it also announced a unilateral and immediate ceasefire, which we still uphold. While we hoped that the Tripoli meetings would achieve an agreement to cease hostilities as one of the requirements for confidence-building, we still hope that priority will be granted towards reaching an agreement to cease hostilities and to a ceasefire, and that this priority would be within the current contacts and activities carried out by the two envoys in order to resume the peace negotiations.

A peaceful settlement and negotiation remain our top priority and our firm choice. The peace process, however, must not become a vicious circle and the resumption of negotiations cannot be considered an open-ended option without a timetable. This would only serve the objectives of some renegade tribal elements that refuse to negotiate and some parties that seek to sabotage the entire peace process.

Therefore, we urge the two negotiators to present a clear plan that defines a deadline for resuming negotiations and finishing the current contacts in order to unite the various movements and their negotiating positions. The setting of this deadline for the resumption of the negotiations is an urgent and vital matter of interest to the international community, which we hope and urge, will fulfil its special commitments to punish those who sabotage the peace process in the light of the resolutions and statements issued by the Security Council in this respect. We sincerely hope that the relevant international Powers will show their commitment to achieve peace through negotiations by doing whatever is necessary to exert pressure to guarantee the participation of all rebel and renegade movements in the negotiations. Otherwise, this means leaving the matter in chaos, encouraging the insurgent movements and sending them mixed and wrong messages.

Therefore, we demand that international parties be obliged to support the peace process. We also particularly salute regional and neighbouring States for their unceasing cooperative efforts in the resolution of the Darfur problem. In this respect, we hope that the upcoming Sharm el-Sheikh meeting, planned for the first week of December 2007, will support efforts to resume negotiations without any further delay.

Our country looks with the same seriousness to the requirements of resolution 1769 (2007), which calls, inter alia, for the deployment of the Hybrid Operation. Our country has been making intense efforts to fulfil its obligations, making it possible to fully cooperate with the joint representatives of the African Union and the United Nations, to carry out the main aspects in the deployment of the Mission, such as establishing the principal operational capacities in El-Fashir, and to achieve progress towards putting in place sector operations in the three Darfur states, including the appointment of commanders, while efforts continue to complete the status-of-forces agreement.

We would like to explain to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations that discussion of the troop deployment agreement should take place in a meeting among the three parties, not in the Security Council.

My country has also carried out its part of the commitments to provide land and necessary and relevant services and logistics. Based on an initiative by the Sudan, a tripartite meeting was held recently in Addis Ababa to complete work on the question of troop contributions, taking into consideration the earlier international elements and Sudan's concerns, which also need to be taken into consideration. The Sudan also participated in the mission that visited Ethiopia and Egypt last week in preparation for the deployment of troops from these two States.

The Government has established a high-level ministerial committee to facilitate and follow up on the deployment of the Hybrid Operation and to deal with various related matters. We hope that the Secretariat will intensify its efforts in the coming months to complete the deployment of the light and heavy support packages, especially since the performance of the Secretariat in this area has certainly been less satisfactory than anticipated — and not because of any problems stemming from the Government of the Sudan. We ask the Secretariat why, after a year, it has not carried out the deployment of the light and heavy support packages. We also hope that the current deliberations in the relevant General Assembly bodies, will lead to provision of the financing and resources necessary for the operation.

In respect of the humanitarian track, I would like to inform the Council that the communiqué to facilitate

humanitarian operations, which was signed in the Sudan on 28 March 2007 has achieved tremendous success. It has been possible to improve and support outreach capacities and to provide assistance to those in need through the fast-track method that was adopted.

In this context, a follow-up mechanism was also established, which includes the Government, the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and other relevant parties. We trust that the second visit to the Sudan of Mr. John Holmes, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, which will take place tomorrow, will achieve further success in promoting the implementation of that communiqué and facilitate the flow of humanitarian assistance. I would like to reaffirm in this forum that the humanitarian situation is undergoing great improvement, as reflected in health and nutrition indices and in the absence of epidemics in the three Darfur states.

Mr. Eliasson has indicated that the deterioration in the humanitarian situation affects the peace settlement. Rather, firm steps forward in the peace settlement will have a positive effect on the humanitarian dimension, not the other way around. The failure of the negotiation team to achieve positive results is what weakens public confidence and undermines the humanitarian situation.

The development and recovery track that was affirmed at the high-level international meeting held in New York on 21 September 2007 is very important because it deals with the roots of conflicts and sought to combat environmental degradation and climate change. We hope that concrete steps will be taken to develop and rebuild Darfur, including increasing the resources and promoting the activities of United Nations agencies and programmes in the Sudan, as reaffirmed in the joint statement issued in Khartoum at the end of the Secretary-General's visit to the Sudan in September 2007.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm the full commitment of the Government of the Sudan to a peaceful political settlement of the Darfur question and our unlimited support for the Special Envoys of the United Nations and the African Union. We also affirm our commitment to putting an end to hostilities and implementing a ceasefire. We hope to see a prompt resumption of the Sirte negotiations. We also hope that the international community will fulfil its obligations with respect to achieving this objective with total seriousness. We hope also to see the inclusion of the Abuja rejectionists in the peace process, while avoiding any mixed messages that could negatively affect the negotiations. I hope that intimidation will be avoided and that the administrative problems will not be exaggerated. I also hope that the failures of others will not be laid at the Sudan's doorstep.

The President: I shall now give the floor to members of the Council.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): At the outset, I would like to thank United Nations Special Envoy Jan Eliasson and Mr. Guéhenno for their reports. I appreciate the efforts of Mr. Eliasson and African Union Special Envoy Salim Salim, along with all participating parties and supporting States of the Darfur peace talks in Libya.

The continuing and urgent situation in Darfur has kept this issue at the top of the Council's agenda for a long time. In order to make progress, the political, humanitarian and security tracks must move forward urgently. These tracks require sustained commitment from all the key players: the Government of Sudan, the rebel groups, the troop-contributing countries, the United Nations and the African Union. There are shortfalls that each must address, to which I will now turn.

Regarding what the Government of the Sudan must do, the Government of the Sudan is key to progress, particularly on the security track. It absolutely must demonstrate, through its statements and its actions, its intent to accept and facilitate an effective peacekeeping mission in Darfur. Based on what we heard today from Mr. Guéhenno, it appears that the Government of the Sudan has thus far failed to do so. First, Sudanese officials have, without any basis, delayed agreement on force composition. The proposed force is clearly primarily African in nature, as the Government of the Sudan requested. We in the Council should act in union to urge the Government of Sudan to demonstrate its seriousness by immediately approving the list of troop-contributing countries provided to it by the Secretariat almost two months ago. Furthermore, the Government of Sudan has failed to take the steps necessary to facilitate the peacekeeping force of the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and conclude an acceptable status-of-forces agreement.

We have heard today, and in numerous other reports, of obstructing access to land and water, impeding the granting of flight clearances, changing of visa procedures and bureaucratic delays in processing arriving material. Taking together, these facts belie an affirmative commitment to the peacekeeping mission itself and are serving to frustrate and delay it.

I was particularly alarmed to hear from Mr. Guéhenno today of the counter-offer made by the Government of the Sudan on the status-of-forces draft demanding the right of the Sudanese Government to suspend or interrupt communications or to have prior notification of movement of forces. The Government of Sudan's record so far shows a lack of good faith in supporting the deployment of an effective force into Darfur. We in the Council must be unrelenting the demanding that Sudan commit itself to the peacekeeping mission and take all necessary measures to facilitate its immediate deployment.

With respect to what the rebels must do, on the political track, in order for the peace process to succeed, the rebels must engage in the political process, establish a unified position and agree on a negotiating team. The Security Council should not shy away from being tough on those groups that stay outside of the dialogue. We should also demand that the rebels not impede the security track. Like Mr. Guéhenno, I find it highly alarming to hear that threats have been levied against the Chinese engineers who have been deployed to Darfur as part of the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). We appreciate China's early contribution to UNAMID and will not tolerate threats against any contributing country.

As to what the troop-contributing countries must do, on the security track, we are increasingly concerned by the lack of contributions for helicopters and heavy transport units. Mobility is critical for a force the size of UNAMID in an area as large as Darfur. We will work bilaterally and in coordination with other Security Council members to urge contributions of these assets. We repeat our call for nations that have air support capability to answer the call of the United Nations. We in the Council must continue to support the efforts of the Secretariat to identify potential contributors and to impress upon them the importance of meeting these demands.

Finally, we believe it critical for the United Nations to appoint a United Nations-African Union chief negotiator and a long-term director of the Joint Mediation Support Team to oversee the peace process on a day-to-day basis to assist the Special Envoy. We also encourage the Secretariat to move swiftly in contracting for additional accommodations for peacekeepers in order to assure that logistical challenges do not further delay the implementation of this important mission.

In conclusion, stepping back, we must also bear in mind that progress on Darfur depends on full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Only if we proceed on all fronts can we hope to move towards some comprehensive peace in the foreseeable future. The United States is committed to leading international efforts to spur forward the CPA, which is strongly linked to any successful end to the Darfur conflict.

Once again, I thank our colleagues for their presentations here today and urge that we not miss the opportunity to take a hard and close look at how we can remove obstacles to make progress on all three fronts: the political, humanitarian and security tracks.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting. We would like to welcome Mr. Jan Eliasson to New York and thank him for the briefing here today. We also thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno for the presentation of the Secretary-General's report.

The situation in Darfur has preoccupied the attention of the international community for a while now and I appreciate the efforts by the Secretary-General of making it a priority. The international community also continues to work in concert by trying to find a durable and lasting solution. Nonetheless, the reality is that the situation in Darfur is having a devastating impact on the humanitarian situation on the ground.

We concur with the observations of the Secretary-General that the situation in Darfur is at a crossroads in that, whereas there is increasing violence in this region, there is also an opportunity for peace through political negotiation and through the deployment of a peacekeeping force that can help make a difference. As we have emphasized on several occasions, the solution in Darfur lies in a political settlement. It is for this reason that we welcome the commitment and the

efforts by United Nations Special Envoy Jan Eliasson and African Union Special Envoy Salim Salim to find a political and peaceful solution to the problem in Darfur.

South Africa believes that the Abuja Peace Agreement provides the framework for the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Darfur and we share the commitment for the speediest conclusion of the political negotiations and the need to ensure that all the armed groups in Darfur respect international opinion and participate in those peace talks.

It is, however, distressing that some of the movements in Darfur decided to stay away from the recent peace conference held in Sirte, Libya. We urge the international community to do everything it can to ensure that everybody joins that process because these talks are a critical element in the solution of the Darfur conflict. The Security Council should be able to take firm action against those who wilfully absent themselves from these negotiations and instead choose to engage in violent actions against the innocent people of Darfur.

Another major issue of concern is the presence of the militia and rebel groups in and around some camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs), which has resulted in violence inside these camps. All necessary steps should be taken to ensure the security of the civilian population and the IDPs as well as women and children in Darfur. We must create conditions for humanitarian assistance to reach the sections of the population in need.

We appreciate the progress that has been made so far with regard to the implementation of the United Nations-African Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), especially the initial operating capability for the headquarters which is now established. We urge the United Nations and the African Union to further accelerate this process so as to ensure that the transfer of authority from the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) can proceed.

At the same time, we are concerned at the continued delays with regard to some of the key areas that are critical for the implementation of UNAMID, in particular, aviation, ground transportation, as well as the force composition of the Mission. Concerning these outstanding critical capabilities it is clear that we, in Africa, are not in a position to provide them and we appeal to those who can to provide the required capabilities.

We are also concerned about the slow pace of the approval of the budget for UNAMID. We agree with Mr. Guéhenno's observation on the need to rapidly deploy a robust peacekeeping operation. In this regard, my delegation calls on Member States to consider and approve the Secretary- General's proposed budget for UNAMID. We need to act expeditiously to meet the timelines set out by the Council.

Clearly the success of UNAMID depends on the cooperation of all the parties involved. In this regard we want to stress the need for an ongoing dialogue between the United Nations, the African Union and the Government of the Sudan and, in this regard, we commend the recent meeting of the parties in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

We note the preliminary results of an investigation initiated by the AMIS Force Commander immediately after the attacks on the AMIS military group site in Haskanita. South Africa, which deplores this act, looks forward to the final report of the African Union-United Nations operation. It is important that when the perpetrators have been identified they be brought to justice.

Lastly, we continue to hold out hope that the tensions which have arisen in the relationship between the north and south will soon be overcome so that both parties will continue to fully implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). We are convinced that full implementation of the CPA will contribute positively to the lasting resolution of the Darfur conflict.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): May I add my own thanks to Special Envoy Jan Eliasson and Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for their reports today, and even more so for their continuing efforts to resolve the crisis in Darfur. I believe today's briefings have shown that the prospects for early peace are slim. Progress is inadequate on all four of the tracks of concern to us — the political track, the security track, the humanitarian track and the tackling of impunity. Let me take each of them in turn.

On the political process, we welcome and strongly support the continuing efforts of the United Nations and African Union (AU) Envoys. We hope the Council will give its continued support to them and we

call on others to rally behind their efforts. In Sirte, the Envoys made a start, but it is clear that the process is going to be long and protracted. We believe we should keep focused on three points that I hope all members of the Council would support.

First of all, all parties in Darfur must be encouraged to engage fully and constructively and, if necessary, we must push them in that direction. Secondly, the immediate priority should be the cessation of hostilities, effectively monitored by the hybrid force. This will be essential to create a period of calm for negotiations on political issues. I welcome the Government of the Sudan's commitment in this regard and we look to them to honour it. The rebels must follow suit. Thirdly, the final settlement reached must be inclusive and sustainable. The talks must involve the full range of Darfur's society, as Mr. Eliasson has said today. They should not be limited to leaders of armed groups. We must learn the lessons of the Darfur peace agreement negotiations. Patience and realism are needed to ensure the effective participation of civil leaders in Darfur.

We will continue to support Mr. Eliasson and Mr. Salim Salim and we urge the Secretary-General to appoint a chief mediator to lead the peace talks on a day-by-day basis in support of the two envoys.

On the peacekeeping force, as Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno has highlighted, there is some small, slow progress being made, but the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) as a whole gets more and more behind schedule. There is a growing risk that the hybrid force will not be an effective military force capable of implementing its mandate when it takes over on 1 January. The consequences of that will be severe for the people of Darfur. The recent attack on the African Union Mission in Sudan in Haskanita was an illustration of the risks that UNAMID will have to be prepared to face, quite apart from its being able to meet the challenge of protecting the civilians of Darfur.

Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno has made clear the problems that the United Nations and the African Union face. First, United Nations Members have failed to provide the capabilities needed. We will continue to lobby potential contributors, and I hope that others will do likewise. The military alternatives, as set out by Mr. Guéhenno, are not attractive.

Secondly, despite its acceptance of resolution 1769 (2007), the Government of the Sudan has failed to demonstrate a commitment to the resolution's effective and timely implementation. Agreements have still not been reached on force composition or on a status of forces agreement. We look to the Government of the Sudan to finalize those quickly; the responses given so far do not give any encouragement that that is its intention. The Government of the Sudan must also provide land and flight permits. The Sudanese Government's seeming determination to politicize the United Nations-African Union force in Darfur increases the risks to the units that are allowed to deploy.

The hybrid force is a difficult enough challenge for the United Nations and the African Union; the Sudan Government's foot-dragging and obstruction risk making it impossible. I am afraid that the harangue we have just heard from the Ambassador of the Sudan does not give us any confidence that the Government of the Sudan is about to change its ways.

Thirdly, the reason we have devoted so much time and energy to the issue of Darfur is the huge suffering of the people of Darfur. Over 200,000 have been killed and over 2 million forced from their homes, many of whom have now lived in makeshift camps for several years. The humanitarian situation remains critical and it continues to get worse. A further 400,000 people have been displaced from their homes this year, according to United Nations figures. Seven humanitarian workers were killed last month — the highest number ever in a single month. The United Nations humanitarian communiqué with the Sudan is still being only partially implemented. I call on the Sudan to lift the restriction on access for humanitarian workers and to allow the international force to create the conditions in which the humanitarian situation can be effectively addressed.

Fourthly, peace in Darfur also depends on ending the culture of impunity. We look to the Government of the Sudan to respect its obligations under resolution 1593 (2005) and carry out the International Criminal Court's arrest warrants. It is, frankly, an insult to the Security Council that one of the indictees charged with crimes against humanity in Darfur has been appointed a minister in the Sudanese Government. I am concerned that, when the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court reports to this Council

next month, he will have little positive to say, and we will have to address that.

Urgent action on all four of these tracks is required to build a sustainable peace in Darfur. The Council should stand ready to take tough action against any party that works to undermine any aspect of the peace process. As we saw following the crisis in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the risks to the security of the Sudan as a whole continue to grow. The United Kingdom calls on the National Congress Party and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement to resume a dialogue to resolve the key challenges to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement so that it can continue to be implemented and remain on schedule.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank Mr. Eliasson for his briefing on the latest developments in the political process in Darfur, Sudan. I should also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing on the progress in the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

It has been China's consistent position that a political settlement of the question of Darfur should be sought through dialogue and consultation on the basis of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Sudan. China firmly supports the dual-track strategy of pushing political negotiations and peacekeeping deployment forward in a balanced manner, and looks forward to the central and lead role to be played by the tripartite mechanism comprised of the Government of the Sudan, the African Union and the United Nations. The facts have proven that such a strategy and mechanism represent the right approach to the settlement of the question of Darfur and have already achieved significant results. The international community should remain confident, pursue cooperation, consolidate the positive momentum achieved to date, and push for continued progress towards an appropriate and comprehensive settlement of the question of Darfur.

As a hot-spot issue facing the international community, the matter of Darfur has complex internal and external causes. A solution will require an integrated approach that addresses symptoms and root causes alike. The situation in Darfur currently faces two major hurdles: the humanitarian situation is deteriorating and the political negotiations have been stymied. In China's view, the former is a symptom of the problem, while the latter is its cause. Without good faith political negotiations among the various parties in Darfur, the security situation cannot fundamentally improve. If various political forces in the Sudan are not motivated to work towards peace, UNAMID, howsoever robust it may be, cannot possibly achieve its objective.

China therefore believes that, by working vigorously to promote political negotiations, Mr. Eliasson has taken an approach inspired by a political vision that addresses the root causes of the problem. China welcomes the convening of the meeting in Sirte, Libya, and appreciates the active efforts of the good offices mission undertaken by the two Special Envoys of the United Nations and the African Union.

Regrettably, however, certain rebel groups are clinging obstinately to their positions and resisting the process of political negotiation, thus trammelling the political settlement of the question of Darfur. At present, the most urgent matter before the international community is to take effective measures to press the rebel groups concerned to take part in the political process. China earnestly urges the groups concerned to prioritize the stable development of their country and the welfare of the people of Darfur, respond positively to the international community's appeals, and make the right choice to participate in the political process as soon as possible so as to pave the way for negotiations towards a comprehensive peace agreement for Darfur at an early date.

Since the adoption of resolution 1769 (2007), the deployment of UNAMID has made significant progress thanks to the common efforts of all parties concerned. China welcomes that progress and highly appreciates the efforts made in that regard by the Secretariat, the African Union and the Government of the Sudan. On the other hand, as the Secretariat noted early in the deployment process, the operation is unprecedented in scale, involving cooperation and interaction between the Government of the Sudan, the United Nations and the African Union and the need to address a complex situation in which certain rebel groups refuse to provide political cooperation. As a result, the deployment is likely to run into a number of difficulties.

The only way out is to continue to strengthen consultation and cooperation among all parties and to steadily reinforce mutual political trust in the process of cooperation and interaction. Mutual political trust is the lubricant of problem-solving. With such trust, a solution can be found to any technical problem, however difficult; without mutual political trust, even the simplest technical problem can evolve into a major stumbling block. At present, care should be taken to avoid politicizing technical questions and letting emotions interfere in the treatment of such issues. We urge the parties concerned to agree as soon as possible on the relevant details of UNAMID's deployment through dialogue and consultation on an equal footing so as to ensure the comprehensive and smooth deployment of UNAMID, in accordance with the provisions of resolution 1769 (2007).

It needs to be pointed out that deploying UNAMID reflects the unanimous decision of the Security Council, which embodies the common understanding of the entire international community. China is seriously concerned over recent remarks made by some rebel groups threatening the safety and security of peacekeepers. We urge them to follow the general trend of the international situation, cooperate with the United Nations and not go further in the wrong direction.

The question of Darfur, like many other international hotspot issues, has its roots in development. While pushing the political process and the peacekeeping deployment forward, the international community should pay equal attention to social and economic development in Darfur. It should take a long-term view and formulate, at another date, a development strategy suitable to the region. Only by improving the livelihood of the people there will it be possible to gradually resolve the conflict and develop harmonious relationships among the various ethnic groups and tribes, as well as between man and nature.

China has been closely watching the developments in Darfur and has made unremitting efforts for the appropriate settlement of the question. The special representative of the Chinese Government has visited the Sudan many times and has gone to Darfur to observe the situation on the ground. China has participated in all major international meetings held thus far on Darfur and has taken an active part in the relevant international good office efforts. The first part of the multifunctional engineering unit contributed by China to UNAMID arrived recently in Nyala. In addition, China has provided to Darfur and the African Union Mission in Sudan humanitarian assistance and donations on many occasions and has given the people of Darfur much assistance in areas including agriculture, education and infrastructure.

We will continue to work with the international community to make our contribution to an early settlement of the question of Darfur and to the realization of peace, stability and development in that region.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Jan Eliasson, for the thorough briefing on progress on the political track for a settlement in Darfur. We are also grateful to the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Guéhenno, for the information on the enhanced efforts by the Secretariat to achieve a prompt deployment of an effective peacekeeping operation of the United Nations and the African Union in Darfur.

We view the work of Special Representatives Eliasson and Salim Salim as successful. Their efforts are yielding significant results. The important thing is that they have managed to launch a negotiating mechanism between Khartoum and the opposition in Darfur. We count on forward movement in the Sirte dialogue.

We welcome here the approach of the Government of the Sudan towards achieving peace agreements with the rebels, in particular and as a first step in the political process, Khartoum's announcement of a unilateral cessation of armed actions in Darfur. The situation in that region of the Sudan remains very complex, but overall, the wave of violence has abated somewhat.

We are seriously concerned with the position of a number of rebel groups, who are continuing to refuse to participate in the political process. We would hope that, in the period of consultations before the renewal of the talks, those groups would review their positions, so that the political process could acquire a genuinely comprehensive character. It is essential to continue to put pressure on rebel leaders, proving to them the advantages of peace over war.

Good intentions will remain merely intentions, unless the parties conclude a bilateral agreement on a

ceasefire and the process of rebel disarmament and demobilization commences. Without progress on the intra-Darfur dialogue, improvement in the humanitarian situation will not be possible, nor will successful completion of the peacekeeping tasks of the African Union and United Nations force in Darfur.

We are very concerned with the delay in the full deployment of the Hybrid Operation. The list of countries supplying forces and material to the African Union/United Nations Hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID), developed by the United Nations and the African Union in consultation with the Government of the Sudan, has, unfortunately, thus far not been fully agreed to. We would expect that the remaining unresolved problems having to do with sending to Darfur what is an unprecedented and, in all respects, important operation, will in the very near future be settled, including the operationalizing of the national inter-agency mechanisms in Khartoum created for those purposes.

We would expect that the Sudanese leadership, like all interested parties, will do everything possible to cooperate with the United Nations and the African Union in the peacekeeping work in Darfur.

Of course any threats against the peacekeepers are unacceptable. The settlement in Darfur must include the implementation of a comprehensive peace agreement and improvement in the regional situation in terms of security and relations between the Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic. That would be promoted by unconditional compliance by States in the region with the agreements reached in that area.

Mr. Biaboroh-Iboro (Congo) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important meeting on Darfur and say to Mr. Eliasson, to whom we reiterate our support for the accomplishment of his difficult and delicate mission, that we have taken due note of recent developments on the ground, which we find far from reassuring.

As early as the consultations of 14 November, Mr. Guéhenno informed us on his contacts in Addis Ababa and the state of preparation of the hybrid force, which is very advanced. We note the information that he has just given us now. That overview allows us to say that the Council now has sufficient information on all aspects of this African Union/United Nations operation and on the behaviour of the different actors.

In the light of those updates and the consideration of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/653), my delegation would like to make the following comments.

We agree with the Secretary-General when he says in his report:

> "The situation in Darfur is at a crossroads. On the one side, there is rising violence, while on the other there is an opportunity for peace through political negotiations, and through the deployment of a peacekeeping force that can help make a difference." (*S/2007/653, para. 31*)

This is, therefore, a decisive moment that the parties to the conflict should be able to seize, which has not always been the case. Indeed, while recognizing all the progress that has been made, in particular since the adoption of resolution 1769 (2007), we cannot help but be deeply concerned by the many problems that persist, in particular the climate of insecurity and the violations of human rights and humanitarian law.

My delegation therefore condemns the climate of insecurity that continues to prevail in the Sudan, particularly throughout Darfur, with continuing attacks against civilians and the personnel of the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and humanitarian agencies. In that respect, we call for the publication of the results of the investigation on the attack on the AMIS camp in Haskanita and the prosecution of the perpetrators of that reprehensible crime.

We also condemn all efforts to undermine the peace process, particularly the refusal of certain rebel groups to participate in the negotiations at Sirte in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and delays by parties seeking to compromise the deployment of the African Union/United Nations Hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID). In that regard, the Council should be firm and impartial in order to be better heard.

At the Council summit of 25 September 2007, Congo already emphasized the need to grasp all opportunities presented by the adoption of resolution 1769 (2007). My delegation would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that call, asking States that might have any influence whatsoever on the parties to motivate them to choose the path to peace. It would also be highly desirable that all efforts be made under

the coordination of the United Nations and the African Union in order for all of the parties to the conflict to hear the same voice.

Now more than ever, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Congo said during the general debate of the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, it is time to do everything possible to accelerate the pace of implementation of the three priority areas underscored by the high-level meeting on Darfur held on 21 September 2007.

The first is political dialogue. The Sirte initiative, which indicates the resumption of dialogue between the parties, should be supported. That inclusive dialogue will be productive only if the other side of the Sudanese conflict also evolves in a positive direction. In that connection, particular emphasis must be put on implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, calling for the settlement of issues through dialogue and for resumption of full participation by the Sudan People's Liberation Army in a national unity government. Any recourse to sanctions, if that were to prove necessary, must take into consideration the rule of total impartiality with respect to the parties.

Next is deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). Deployment of UNAMID is, without doubt, the only guarantee for restoring peace in Darfur. There are no other alternatives. Thus, it is vital to deploy a robust and credible force, one that can effectively ensure the protection of civilians and guarantee implementation of commitments made.

We therefore express our concerns regarding the difficulties in securing the Mission's budget. Congo is prepared to make its modest contribution by supplying two infantry companies to the African Union and United Nations for use by UNAMID. We wish to echo the Secretary-General's appeal for medium-sized transport companies and helicopter units needed, without which the Mission's intervention capacity would be gravely compromised.

We also wish to ask the Government of the Sudan to continue to cooperate with the United Nations and the African Union by facilitating deployment of the hybrid force as soon as possible. We welcome measures already taken with the unilateral ceasefire on the eve of the Sirte talks. That cooperation, which we have sincerely hoped for, should help to facilitate all procedures, including acceptance of troop composition, acquisition of Base areas and granting overflight rights to United Nations aircraft.

Finally, there is the matter of humanitarian assistance. Here, suffice it to quote the Secretary-General, who, in his report, notes in particular,

> "the suffering of the people of Darfur, who continue to be threatened by violence and insecurity and to languish in camps 17 months after the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement". (*S/2007/653, para. 34*)

It was enough for us to see the images of those helpless children, women and men in Darfur to know where our duty lay. Therefore, Congo will support all initiatives that will help promote dialogue and peace in Darfur, but also any other impartial coercive measures, if they proved necessary.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by thanking you personally, Sir, and the Indonesian delegation for the initiative of convening this meeting and providing an opportunity to all Members of the Organization to reflect on the situation in Darfur. Likewise, I wish to express our gratitude for the briefings by Ambassador Jan Eliasson and Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno on the progress made in the political process and on the deployment of the Hybrid Operation.

We cannot speak of the crisis in Darfur without emphasizing, as did Mr. Eliasson, that peace can only be achieved through a political process of consultation. Therefore, we fully support the diplomatic endeavours and mediation undertaken by Ambassadors Eliasson and Salim.

Regarding the Sirte meeting, we share the view that it was successful as a first step in the reconciliation process. We believe it is essential to keep up the pace of negotiations, and we support the consultations undertaken by the Joint Mediation Support Team in different areas of the region, with a view to drawing in those rebel groups that did not participate at Sirte.

As for the Hybrid Operation, we recognize the technical efforts of the African Union and the United Nations, and we thank those countries that have offered troops in solidarity to carry out the difficult task. Like previous speakers, we are concerned by the delays in obtaining necessary troops. In that connection, we suggest that greater interaction might be desirable

between members of the Council and the parties in conflict, also the African Union and the troop-contributing countries. We also appeal to everybody not to lose sight of the fact that the main objective of the Hybrid Operation is pacification in Darfur.

Panama was among the delegations that considered it important to ensure the participation of the representative of the Government for the Darfur region in the meeting. We are pleased to hear of his commitment to the political process. But we are concerned that we have heard no appropriate reference to the political crisis that is being endured by the people in Darfur. The time the Organization has devoted to the crisis in Darfur is not one that can be measured in terms of the military conflict between the Government and the rebel troops. It is to be measured in the tremendous suffering of the people of Darfur. In that same connection we are also concerned that the representative of the Sudan has not dealt clearly and specifically enough with the problems that were raised by Mr. Guéhenno regarding the make-up of the hybrid force and the negotiation of the status-of-forces agreement.

It is not the fate of members of the Security Council or our citizens at stake here — we are talking about the fate of the Sudan and the people of the Sudan and it is the Government in Darfur that has the main responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the people. If we do not see in the future a significant change, in the commitment of the Government of the Sudan, not only to the political process, but also to ensuring protection and to allowing the international community to ensure the protection of the people of Darfur as needed. If that does not happen, then the Council and the Organization will need to consider alternative measures.

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): I too would like to thank Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Eliasson for their briefings. At the outset, I wish to reaffirm the full support of France for their efforts, as well as those of the Secretary-General, in order to find with the African Union a way out of the Darfur crisis.

The transfer of authority from the African Union Mission in the Sudan to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) is today close at hand. The deadline was set by resolution 1769 (2007), adopted unanimously by the Security Council. So it is our responsibility to assist the Secretariat and the African Union in holding to that deadline. We should also make sure that the new operation will be sufficiently robust and deterrent, so that the tragedy of Haskanita — which we have condemned very firmly — cannot occur again.

The French delegation welcomes the countries that have already accepted to send troops as part of the list established by the United Nations and the African Union. We would call on those countries capable of providing needed specialized expertise to UNAMID to do so.

We also wish to pay tribute to the Secretariat and the African Union for their ongoing concern to consult the authorities in the Sudan. The Under-Secretary-General told us a few moments ago about the numerous stages. We can no longer renegotiate agreements. Now we must implement them transparently.

France calls for the full cooperation of the Government of the Sudan with the United Nations and the African Union to help deploy the UNAMID mission. That agreement reached last June was a step in the right direction and the Council applauded that. Now it is time for the Sudanese authorities to translate that agreement into action, because the United Nations and the African Union did everything possible to bear in the mind the concerns of the Government of the Sudan, while maintaining a satisfactory degree of effectiveness in the forces.

The terms of the debate are clear. They were clearly set out in detail by the Under-Secretary-General. Now the Government of the Sudan must take on its responsibilities and demonstrate that they truly accept, as they committed to in the Security Council, the deployment of the hybrid force.

This is no longer the time for procrastination. We are talking about the security and the well-being of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children whose only hope now lies in the United Nations and the African Union. We are also talking about the effectiveness and credibility of the Council in its capacity to maintain international peace and security.

With regard to the political process, we welcome the launching of the Sirte negotiations under the aegis of the co-mediators from the African Union and the United Nations, Mr. Jan Eliasson and Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim. It is the responsibility of all the parties to ensure

success by respecting a cessation of hostilities and by participating in the talks.

Concerning the particular case of Abdul Wahid Mohamed al-Nur, France will spare no effort in persuading him to rejoin the process. We are fulfilling our responsibilities and will continue to do so. We call on all the parties to do likewise.

My delegation recognizes the significant contribution made by the autonomous Government of South Sudan and by regional actors to the process led by the United Nations and the African Union. The initial results achieved at Sirte and Juba are encouraging. However, we hope that we can encourage all actors to continue to work together in constant contact with the co-mediators, who are directing the entire process. Finally, I should like to express France's support for the decision of the co-mediators to include Darfur's civil society in the political process.

At the humanitarian level, we cannot accept restrictions on free humanitarian access when more than 4 million people — two thirds of Darfur's population — need assistance. My delegation welcomes the upcoming visit to the Sudan by Mr. John Holmes, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, which will make it possible to assess the implementation of the 28 March Joint Communiqué. We received with great concern information from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs concerning the forced relocation of displaced persons to south Darfur. Here, we recall our commitment to the voluntary nature of return, in accordance with international humanitarian law. We also call on all parties to respect the civilian nature of camps for displaced persons.

In conclusion, I should like to recall the importance that France attaches to the fight against impunity, which cannot be neglected, given the gravity of the crimes that have been committed in Darfur. The Council will soon have occasion to revisit this issue with the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. Then we shall recall our total commitment to ensuring that justice follows its course.

Mr. Matulay (Slovakia): Allow me to join previous speakers in thanking Special Envoy Eliasson for his comprehensive briefing. My delegation is always delighted to have him among us in any of his United Nations incarnations. At the same time, we would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his valuable briefing on the deployment of the hybrid force in Darfur.

Slovakia welcomes the opening of peace talks in Sirte under the leadership of the United Nations and the African Union (AU). We would like to commend in particular the joint efforts of the two Special Envoys, who have been relentlessly promoting a negotiated political settlement to the Darfur conflict. The international community must do whatever is possible to move that process forward. We fully support the AU — United Nations mediation, and we hope that the Sirte process will lead to a sustainable political settlement in Darfur.

We are pleased that both the AU and the United Nations have made Darfur their top priority. The joint endeavour of both organizations in that respect is very encouraging. At the same time, we appreciate the active diplomatic engagement of several regional and international partners. Even though the political and peacekeeping processes have proved to be extremely difficult and challenging, we continue to believe that there can be no military solution to the conflict.

The situation in Darfur is undoubtedly at a very important crossroads. With a very fragile political and security situation on the ground and a deteriorating humanitarian situation, the international community needs to act urgently in order to change the fortunes of the people of Darfur, who have suffered too much over the past four-and-a-half years. It has become obvious that, if we are to move beyond the status quo, full cooperation and genuine commitment on the part of the Sudan are also required.

If the peace process is to be successful, it remains essential to immediately stop the violence by all parties and to broaden the participation in the peace talks. We encourage all rebel movements to join and engage fully in the peace process. It is likewise important to reiterate the Security Council's call on all parties to urgently agree on and implement a cessation of hostilities. In that connection, we also call on all parties to implement the Council's decision in good faith, as well as their commitments with regard to the protection of civilians.

The deadline for the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) pursuant to resolution 1769 (2007) is drawing near. The Council has authorized deployment of a robust and effective force that should be able to

make a real difference on the ground. In order to ensure that, it will be indispensable to find the missing transportation and aviation units and to deploy the key technical and engineering units on the ground. It is clear that UNAMID cannot be deployed if it does not receive support from all Member States.

At the same time, UNAMID will not be a successful operation without a sufficient level of cooperation from all parties, primarily from the Government of the Sudan. Unfortunately, throughout the two years of our non-permanent membership in the Security Council, we have been witnessing a perceived mistrust and repeated attempts to delay the deployment of a peacekeeping force, rather than actual cooperation, from the Sudan. In our view, under the current circumstances, when the situation on the ground requires an immediate United Nations response, it is unacceptable to pick and choose which UNAMID troop contributors will be allowed to participate in this crucial peacekeeping undertaking. We therefore call on the Government of the Sudan to agree without any further delay on the proposed composition of the force and thus to allow the United Nations and the AU to expedite and finalize the process of UNAMID's deployment.

Furthermore, the international community, in cooperation with the Government of the Sudan, should do more to address the alarming humanitarian situation in camps for internally displaced persons. We strongly urge all parties in Darfur to cease the violations and to recommit to full implementation of the Joint Communiqué on facilitation of humanitarian activities.

In conclusion, since there can be no peace without justice, I would like to underscore our full support for the investigation and prosecution of crimes committed in Darfur that fall under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC). We would like to recall that, under resolution 1593 (2005), all States, including the Sudan, shall cooperate fully with and provide any necessary assistance to the ICC and its Prosecutor. We look forward to the forthcoming briefing by the Prosecutor of the ICC in the Security Council next month.

The current efforts of the AU-United Nations mediation team, as well as the engagement of both organizations in the deployment of the Hybrid Operation, represent a window of opportunity for a long-awaited breakthrough and a departure from the vicious circle of violence in Darfur. Slovakia continues to fully support the pursuit of that important goal.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): Allow me to join others in thanking Special Envoy Jan Eliasson and Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for their very lucid, focused and clear briefings and, more generally, for the truly outstanding job that they are doing. It is a great pleasure to see Mr. Eliasson here and to observe how, in addressing the situation in the Sudan and Darfur, he is infused with both passion and compassion, which is the right chemistry in life, politics and international affairs.

Because of the restraints on our time, I shall not repeat what other speakers before me have said, particularly the Ambassadors of France and the United Kingdom. But I should just like to say that Italy fully shares and strongly supports their assessments and their indications as to the way forward. I think that all members of the Security Council share the objective of strengthening the Secretary-General's hand and thus strengthening his representative's hand. I believe it is very important that he be aware — as, I am sure, the people of the Sudan are aware — that all of us support him in what he is saying and doing, in the messages that he is sending and in the requests for action that he is making. I believe that that is what is important.

I was really struck by what Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno said. Usually he is very cool and understated, but this time he was very, very clear, and the message was very worrying. If six months ago we had heard what Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno just said, we would have been worried; but to listen to what we have just heard only one month from the transfer of authority, when UNAMID must be deployed, is quite alarming and puts us into emergency mode. To hear about alternative options — fallbacks — one month out from the transfer is really very alarming. I hope, as has been stated by others, that this fallback position, is not needed.

The situation of the people of the Sudan — the suffering of those on the ground — is not the only thing that is at stake; as Ambassador Ripert said, it is also the credibility of the United Nations and the Security Council. That is what is at stake, and we are perceived by the media around the world to lack the capacity to address the situation. That is the issue.

I was very pleased to hear Ambassador Mohamad emphasize the full commitment of the Government of

the Sudan to the political process. That is of fundamental importance, in my opinion. He also mentioned unlimited support to the United Nations, the United Nations Special Envoy and, of course, the African Union Special Envoy. I feel that this is very positive.

It is striking that, looking at other issues, what Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno has told us and what Ambassador Mohamad has told us are really diametrically irreconcilable: one says the opposite of what the other says.

We have only one month. If the time limit is to be respected, all of the differences must be ironed out in the next 10 days. Otherwise, implementation will be impossible, even with a gradual approach in the field. Maybe it is not our job in the Security Council, as Ambassador Mohamad said, to address the technical details of all the arrangements. But it certainly is appropriate for the Security Council to have clarity about what is going on as we listen to a Permanent Representative who says the opposite of what the Under-Secretary-General has said. I think we need clarity here, and we need to see how to iron out the details.

As we are really pressed for time, as the incoming presidency of the Security Council — and if my colleagues in the Council agree — I feel that it is urgent for the participants to start next week to work on the basis of a tripartite mechanism. It would then be very appropriate during the first week or first half of next month to have a special meeting to see how the differences have been ironed out. As has been said, we cannot afford to lose more time. I am ready and willing to adapt the programme of work of the Council in order to have clarity on this point and on this issue, where our credibility is at stake.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): We wish to join others in thanking Mr. Jan Eliasson, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, for his briefing and to take this opportunity to congratulate him and his African Union (AU) counterpart, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, on successfully convening the Darfur peace talks in Libya last month in the face of serious obstacles. My delegation is also grateful to Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his statement.

We were particularly pleased that, through the firmness of the Special Envoys and their determination to forge ahead, the meeting was not derailed by the vicious attacks launched at a delicate stage in the preparations by some armed elements against peacekeepers of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) at their base at Haskanita in Southern Darfur. My delegation is anxious to learn the facts surrounding that unfortunate incident — an incident that once again underlined the urgent need for the parties to adhere faithfully to their obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolutions 1591 (2005) and 1769 (2007).

Ghana looks forward to the next round of talks and trusts that the progress made in Sirte, especially the invaluable lessons learned, will serve as a road map both for effective preparations and for the conduct of the talks. In this connection, we commend the Special Envoys for reaching out to grass-roots parties and seeking to involve them directly in the talks.

That innovative approach has demonstrated that the people could indeed be empowered to claim ownership of the Darfur peace process and thereby push their leaders along the path to lasting peace. It is our hope that that lesson was not lost on those rebel leaders who refused to attend the Sirte meeting, contrary to the wishes and expectations of the international community. All sides in the conflict must understand that the ultimate goal of the Darfur peace process is to secure the well-being of the people.

Therefore, no useful purpose can be served by any more fragmentation of the rebel groups, whether induced by their own internal dynamics or by external factors. In the current circumstances, no one side holds all the cards, and it is imperative for the Sudanese people to rally around their shared interest in a united, peaceful and prosperous country.

In spite of the setbacks to the Sirte talks, Ghana is of the view that the meeting marked a significant step forward in the peace process. The renewed momentum for dialogue has been greatly strengthened by the much-welcomed declaration of cessation of hostilities by the Government of the Sudan. We commend the Sudanese authorities for this bold decision and call on the rebels to reciprocate the Government's gesture and actively participate in the dialogue in order to address the root causes of the conflict.

Admittedly, it will not be easy for the parties to find common ground on the core issues of security, power-sharing and wealth-sharing without the willingness to compromise. On the other hand, we

cannot ignore the fact that at present the deteriorating humanitarian situation is a matter of life and death for millions of displaced persons. Therefore, we must work relentlessly to ensure that there is an uninterrupted flow of relief material to the needy and that steps are taken to facilitate the safe return of all displaced persons.

In the meantime, everything must be done to preserve the cessation of hostilities announced by the Government of the Sudan, through the timely deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). My delegation welcomes the ongoing preparations towards that end. At the same time, we are concerned that the process appears to be falling behind schedule because some key issues have still not been resolved. It is in the interest of all concerned that UNAMID be deployed without further delay, and we urge them to be mindful of their obligations under resolution 1769 (2007).

In conclusion, my delegation believes that recent developments have brought into sharp relief the elements that are required, at this stage, to advance the peace process on all fronts. It will become evident in the coming months whether or not sufficient political will exists to fuel the progress towards lasting peace and stability in Darfur.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by thanking the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Jan Eliasson, for his briefing on the Darfur peace talks, and also the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, for his briefing on the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

The picture is overwhelming. However, in the comments that follow, I will be focusing on only the political aspects. We share the views expressed — an equally worrying analysis — in the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/653). The security conditions in Darfur continue to deteriorate, while the Government of the Sudan and the rebel movements are finding it extremely difficult to get peace talks under way, despite the tireless efforts of both the United Nations and the African Union.

The cycle of violence on the ground compounds the humanitarian situation. To overcome this violence, a political solution to the crisis is necessary. The success of a political agreement is the underpinning of a lasting peace in Sudan, in parallel with a correct implementation of the peace treaty between the North and South Sudan. In seeking to achieve a stable Sudan, we are working for regional stability in East Africa.

Belgium notes that the numerous endeavours to carry forward the peace talks in Darfur. Through the Sirte process have not yet been reflected in concrete progress in the quest for a negotiated solution. We are of the view that there is an essential prior condition for the success of negotiations, namely, the strict and immediate cessation of hostilities by all parties.

An effective oversight mechanism must also go hand in hand with the laying down of arms. It is up to the parties to commit fully and openly to the quest for a lasting agreement. That is an obligation laid down by our Council; it is not just an option.

Belgium calls on the Government of the Sudan and all the rebel movements to become immediately involved in the peace negotiations and to draw into their discussion all components of civil society, including tribal leaders, representatives of displaced persons and women's movements. In this way, the talks will have the broadest possible base and the negotiated agreement will benefit from solid and lasting support.

Beyond the developments in the political process, Belgium deplores the major delays that are apparent in deployment of the heavy support package and UNAMID. Side by side with the peace negotiations, this hybrid force is the other dimension in the stabilization of Darfur.

It is up to the Sudanese authorities to facilitate unconditional implementation, in keeping with resolution 1769 (2007) and the successive appeals made in this respect by the Council. The fact that the Under-Secretary-General has already been obliged to raise the difficult issues that the Council will face in the case of continued non-cooperation by the Government of the Sudan is a matter of grave concern. The Council must, however, assume its responsibilities.

Lastly, Belgium would like to restate its commitment to international justice and to the fight against impunity. The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court will be reporting to us in a few days on the evolution of his activities regarding the situation in Darfur. We know that his view regarding the cooperation of the Sudanese authorities is harsh and reflects a situation that continues to deteriorate to the point of virtual non-existence, while there have been

two arrest warrants issued — in particular against Mr. Ahmad Haroun, who has since been promoted to the post of Minister — and while resolution 1593 (2005) requires that the Sudan fully cooperate with the Court and the Prosecutor.

We do not and will not tolerate the continued indifference of the Government of the Sudan to the appeals of the international community in the face of grave violations of international humanitarian law.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like at the outset to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, Mr. Jan Eliasson, for his valuable efforts during the peace discussions in Sirte, Libya. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report to the Council (S/2007/653) and my gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his briefing on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

Despite our acknowledgment that the implementation of resolution 1769 (2007), regarding the deployment of the Hybrid Operation, has encountered some difficulties, the efforts to deal with those difficulties are themselves proof that work is under way to implement the resolution. The report of the Secretary-General acknowledges that there is real progress in carrying out the resolution, including the efforts of the Sudanese national unity Government to allocate land for camps for the Operation in place of other land that could not be allocated due to unforeseen circumstances or because it was already occupied or privately owned. Work is also under way to carry out the aviation agreement. All of this indicates the seriousness of the Government, which was welcomed by the Secretary-General in his report.

The Government has created an interagency ministerial committee in preparation for the deployment of the Hybrid Operation. Therefore, the United Nations must, in turn, do its part to complete the circle of collective responsibility for the implementation of the resolution. The composition of the contributed troops must be completed while maintaining its African character, as acknowledged in the same Security Council resolution. We should speed up approval of African offers submitted to the Secretariat and overcome the bureaucracy that delays their approval. We must take into consideration the reservations of the Government of the Sudan because it is the party that is primarily concerned. We must promote dialogue, understanding and constructive coordination with that Government. Also, the General Assembly Committee concerned continues to face difficulties in estimating the appropriations necessary for the Hybrid Operation. All of these factors combined affect the deployment of the Operation.

I wonder who should be held responsible for the delay in appropriating the necessary finances to deploy the mission. In order to carry out this operation, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations must quickly and promptly complete the light and heavy support packages for the mission. They should not have ignored this question once resolution 1769 (2007) was adopted.

We must put an end to the questioning and the unconstructive criticism of others. We must continue confidence-building efforts with the host country for the Hybrid Operation. Some people believe in the principle of complementarity between the principal tracks identified by the Secretary-General to deal with the Darfur question, namely, the political, peacekeeping and humanitarian tracks. We must also take care not to negatively affect the achievements already realized. We must maintain confidence-building efforts and we must not mix the tracks in a way that negatively affects the integrated effort. We must not continue to blame one party alone and overlook the negative role played by the insurgents and the threats they pose to the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel and to humanitarian aid shipments.

The Haskanita terrorist incident against the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) must lead us to seriously consider investigating this heinous crime and punishing the criminals. I would like to ask the Secretariat about the most recent developments regarding that terrorist act.

The boycott of the Sirte discussions in Libya by the Sudan Liberation Movement and the leader of the Justice and Equality Movement placed an obstacle in the path of peace and the Darfur peace process. Unfortunately, those renegades are not subject to sufficient pressure by the Security Council, especially by certain members of the Council, despite the fact that the boycott has greatly and noticeably hindered the discussions, which are part of the road map.

These people not only failed to attend the peace talks, but also had a negative influence on those who participated in the Sirte discussions and ruined the positive atmosphere of the meetings. The Council must take necessary action against those who hindered the progress of the peace process, including by considering targeted sanctions against them. We would like to know Mr. Eliasson's opinion on imposing sanctions against those individuals.

Finally, we firmly believe that uniting our efforts to find a comprehensive peace agreement for Darfur will help us to avoid many significant complications, including in the ongoing debate about the composition and deployment of the Hybrid Operation. Therefore, we must exert all possible efforts to carry forward the peace process, to give our full support to the United Nations and the African Union Envoys and to continue promoting confidence-building measures with the national unity Government while taking all necessary measures against those who hinder the Darfur peace process.

Ms. Tincopa (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Let me begin by welcoming the participation of the Permanent Representative of the Sudan in this meeting. Likewise, we would like to thank Mr. Jan Eliasson, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, for his briefing and to reaffirm our support for his work in the political dialogue on Darfur. We would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his briefing.

Peru welcomes the initiatives that are being taken to realize the political dialogue process in Darfur. We note the participation of the African Union (AU) and the regional partners working with the United Nations in seeking dialogue among the parties. In the light of the most recent developments, it is clear that we must persevere to bring an end to the crisis and achieve peace and security in the region. The process of peace talks, which began on 27 October in Sirte demonstrates this.

Here, we feel it necessary to repeat to the parties that it is only through political dialogue and inclusive consultations that a sustainable, viable and comprehensive solution to the Darfur crisis can be reached. We also believe it is important to persevere with endeavours to ensure that the rebel groups that have not yet joined the process will do so before the beginning of the next stage, assuming their responsibility to the peace and stability of the region.

We believe that the topics dealt with by the parties during the two stages of the discussions — security, wealth- and power-sharing and, humanitarian affairs, among others — are complex and are a point of controversy between the rebel groups and the Government. However, we feel it is necessary that the Mediation and the parties work to achieve sustainable and practical solutions that will guarantee the safety and security of the population and the continuation of the process.

The dismantling of the militias is a matter that should be part of the agenda for these talks. We believe in the need to have a disarmament process of the Janjaweed militia that goes beyond the Darfur Peace Agreement that was signed in May last year. International oversight is necessary to ensure that it is effectively and promptly implemented.

Moreover, we are concerned by the continued deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation. It continues to be essential to ensure the protection of the civilian population and that the parties cease hostilities. Additionally, all parties should be required to ensure total and unhindered humanitarian access. We also reaffirm the need for the Government of the Sudan and all parties to the conflict to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court and its Prosecutor, in keeping with the provisions of resolution 1593 (2005).

On the subject of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, Peru echoes the concerns about the delays in deployment that could lead to a further deterioration in security situations. Therefore, the established time frames must be met, and the Blue Helmets must assume their responsibilities, as mandated by this Council.

The Government of national unity should cooperate to ensure that all pending matters are resolved, including the matter of aviation and land transportation units, and to ensure that their freedom of movement and communication are not hampered. The objective is to ensure that deployment of the Hybrid Operation takes place with the necessary due urgency so that it can start to provide needed protection to the civilian population.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Indonesia.

We join others in welcoming the Special Envoy for Darfur, Mr. Jan Eliasson, and thanking him for his briefing on the political process on Darfur. Our thanks go also to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, for his update on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

It has been one year since the United Nations, the African Union (AU) and the Government of the Sudan agreed in Addis Ababa, on 16 November 2006, to work on three broad fronts to resolve the Darfur crisis: the political process, the deployment of a peacekeeping operation and the strengthening of the ceasefire. We are making some headway on two of them — the political and peacekeeping tracks — as today's briefings illustrate. However, the briefings also reveal the challenges we continue to face.

My delegation acknowledges that giving more time to the rebel movements may be necessary in order to allow them to arrive at a common platform, needed to facilitate the next negotiating stage with the Government of the Sudan. Such efforts are called for because of the need to facilitate the talks. We support the Mediation's approach of involving Darfur's civil society and other stakeholders, thus providing as wide a basis as possible for the peace process. We also encourage countries in the region to continue with their constructive roles in supporting the political process. We underline the importance of support by Member States for the political process and of encouraging all rebel movements to participate in the talks.

While more time is needed, my delegation is troubled by the postponement in establishing a cessation of hostilities, which is crucial not only for Darfur's civilian population but also for peace in Darfur, as it would strengthen confidence-building and foster a conducive environment for negotiations. We therefore appreciate the ceasefire announced by the Government of the Sudan.

In spite of delays on the political front, the peacekeeping track should move forward within its already determined time frame, which would also enable it to support the political process. We therefore encourage the Secretariat to continue to work with troop-contributing countries, including obtaining critical force enablers, such as ground transport and helicopter capabilities. The international community should not retreat from the commitment it made in Addis Ababa last year and in resolution 1769 (2007) on supporting the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation. We also encourage the Secretariat to continue to consult with the Sudanese authorities, with a view to agreeing, as soon as possible, on remaining technical issues.

We underline the point in the Secretary-General's report (S/2007/653) about the perpetrators of the attack against the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) in Haskanita two months ago. This attack demonstrates not only the urgency of deploying a robust and credible force in Darfur, but also the need for the Council to take resolute action against such perpetrators. The Hybrid Operation needs and deserves the Council's full and unwavering backing. The troop- and police-contributing countries, on which the Council relies to establish and enforce its mandate, deserve nothing less than our full support.

On the humanitarian aspect of the Darfur problem, we welcome the fact that the March 2007 joint communiqué has significantly facilitated humanitarian operations in Darfur, as reported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. However, we are deeply concerned that reprehensible attacks against humanitarian workers have continued. We are concerned that vehicles belonging to international non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies are frequent targets for carjacking by non-State armed groups. Attacks against those employed in the service of peace violate not only the laws of war, but also our moral sensibilities and should not be allowed to continue.

In closing, I should like to reaffirm Indonesia's strong support for the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, Mr. Jan Eliasson, and the African Union Special Envoy, Mr. Salim Salim, in continuing with their efforts in the Darfur political process.

I shall now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to Mr. Jan Eliasson, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Darfur, to respond to the comments made.

Mr. Eliasson: To me, the summary that you made, Sir, in your national capacity reflects very well the views that I have heard expressed around this table.

I want to express my deep appreciation, and I think I speak on behalf of my African Union counterpart and friend, Salim Ahmed Salim, in thanking you for the wide, deep and full support that you have given us in our work. It strengthens our hand considerably and we very much appreciate that expression of confidence.

On a personal basis, I also want to express thanks to several participants here, with whom I have worked in other capacities. I am glad to see them in this incarnation, as our colleague from Slovakia said.

I think it is important that we understand the importance of creating conditions conducive to peace and a political process. That is why there is a relationship, after all, between the humanitarian situation, the security situation and the political talks. They mutually reinforce each other or, if negative, hurt each other. So I think we have to see the issues in their totality.

I am also glad that our colleagues from South Africa and Slovakia brought up the situation in the camps. If I were to look back at this 11-month period in which I have been working on that issue, the most serious word of warning that I would want to extend to the Council concerns the situation in the camps. It is a situation of frustration and anger. Members can imagine life with fathers not going out into the fields, mothers being worried about what happens if they go out to pick up firewood, and youths growing up for nearly four years in some of the camps, radicalized, and with arms also coming into the camps. That is the new danger that we face, along with the tribal clashes, which are new phenomena that we have to analyse very carefully.

I do not know whether members are aware of this, but there are more people dying in tribal clashes than in clashes between Government units and the movements. Over 700 people have been killed in tribal clashes this year. Those are the new realities and new dangers in Darfur that we have to follow very closely and try to prevent from exploding.

The different points made here reinforce my and Salim's work in getting all parties to engage. It is very important for the credibility of the political talks that we have wide and full participation in those talks and that all assume that responsibility. I hope that those representatives of movements who hesitated to come now find themselves in positive and constructive discussions among themselves of how and when they will enter the process. I think and believe, from some of the contacts we have, that they will do so. We need to have a critical mass of participants from the movements to make the talks meaningful, and therefore everything the members of the Security Council can do, collectively and individually as representatives and Member States, is very important at this stage.

We have to deal with the basic problems of Darfur. The humanitarian operation is a $700-million operation employing 12,000 people. The peacekeeping operation, as Jean-Marie Guéhenno will probably expand upon, is a huge enterprise, also costing enormous amounts of money. We need to be able to deal with the basic issues so that we will not carry on with measures that do not deal with the root causes. Everything the Council can do to make all parties engage and prepare for the talks is very important.

I also hope that the Government of the Sudan will be clear with respect to its delegation and that it will be able to deal with the problems that I think it knows are there in terms of making sure that the delegation is one representing a Government of National Unity. That is important, again, for the strength of the negotiation process.

A cessation of hostilities is extremely important, and I regret again that the absence of some of the movements did not make it possible to reach a meaningful cessation of hostilities agreement. We welcome the unilateral declaration of the Government, and we hope that the movements will now follow suit.

We have, of course, a problem with monitoring, because we do not have the capacity yet to do the monitoring. We have not reached the level of deployment of troops to have a strong verification and monitoring mechanism, but I hope that will come with the deployment of troops. At this stage, that is therefore very much a political commitment that I hope the parties will all make.

I am also very grateful for the Security Council's support for the inclusion, to the extent possible, of the voices of the people of Darfur — the civil society component. It was striking, I should like to say, how enthusiastic the representatives of civil society were at the meeting in Sirte. That positive image did not come out so strongly in the world press, but it was quite comforting to me, who had been travelling a lot in Darfur, seeing the camps and the villages out in the country, to hear those voices expressing the hope,

longing and dreams for peace. I think we should keep in mind all the time what the people of Darfur really desire. I am glad that we, in a transparent manner, have been able to discuss that participation with the Government of the Sudan and also with the movements. We will want to have their voices heard, but of course it will be done in such a way that the negotiation structure is not changed considerably. But we certainly need to have their voices at the table in different forms of consultations. We worked together, both with the Darfur-Darfur dialogue and with our own civil affairs component, the United Nations, which is well represented in the field.

I take to heart the advice of some here about finding a chief mediator under the Special Envoys to do the day-to-day negotiation. We have, for the time being, two excellent chief mediators, Taye-Brook Zerihoun of the United Nations and Sam Ibok of the African Union. We will discuss the proposal made here. I understand that it goes in the direction of finding a joint chief mediator. It is an interesting proposal that we will carry forward.

The threats against individual nations directed from different movements is something I, too, take seriously. I will travel myself to Darfur after the regional meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh. I will go out to the field and hope to meet as many of the movements as possible. I will also be in contact with other stakeholders and I will certainly send that message of the needed respect for the peacekeepers and for the authority of the United Nations and the African Union.

That is an extremely interesting and fascinating, but difficult, task: working together in the spirit of Chapter VIII of the Charter and having the African Union and United Nations performing a common task, both in the area of peacekeeping and in the area of political talks. It is a difficult theatre, as we have seen, in which we have chosen to prove the importance of that cooperation, but we will certainly do our best to move this process forward. We must also remember that, in the end, everything comes back to the political will of the parties.

There were questions on timelines and on enforcing sanctions. Those are the most difficult questions, which I have saved for the end.

It is always desirable to have clear timelines and set deadlines, but it is also dangerous to set artificial deadlines when there is a political dynamic that we must respect. Mr. Salim and I will try to combine the sense of urgency that is definitely needed with making sure that we get the critical mass of representation at the talks. We will have the regional meeting, which is going to be important, as the meeting in Eritrea was. After Sharm el-Sheikh, we will go directly to the field and work with the parties. We may then possibly be in a position where a meeting of the Arusha style is necessary and desirable, and then we hope to move as quickly as possible to the substantive talks. But I do not think that I want to put that in terms of exact dates.

On the issue of enforcing the sanctions, it is not for the Special Envoys — and I know I speak on behalf of Mr. Salim on this point too — to either encourage or discourage, from our side, the sanctions. I note the presidential statement of 24 October by the Council (S/PRST/2007/41), in which it supports the peace process and speaks about the risks involved in undermining the peace process and peacekeeping operations, if I recall the text. I can say that when I am travelling and talking to both the Government of the Sudan and the movements, they are deeply aware of the fact that I will report what I learn during those trips to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who follows these issues extremely closely and with deep engagement, but also that we will report those developments to the Security Council. That usually makes an impression, if I may put it diplomatically.

It is therefore up to member States to draw conclusions from the facts as we present them. I would hope that we now find ourselves in a process in which most of those who have hesitated to join the talks would come to the conclusion that they should join the talks, in the interest of peace for their people, and that we will have a quick and meaningful negotiation thereafter. If we have complete defiance of that process, it is up to member States to draw the conclusions that they find the most appropriate and that will help the process to succeed in the end.

The President: I thank Mr. Eliasson for the clarifications he has provided.

I now give the floor to Mr. Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to respond to comments and questions raised.

Mr. Guéhenno: There was only one real question that was raised, which was on the delays in the deployment of the heavy support package. The delays in the heavy support package are quite revealing of the

broader issues that we face in the overall deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), of which, in a way, the heavy support package is just one early phase. There is not one single explanation for those delays; there is a combination of explanations.

First, in some cases, capacities that were announced by troop contributors, upon verification by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, were actually not available or were not the ones that had been requested.

A second aspect is the hesitation sometimes of troop contributors themselves, as they delay the load list, as we call it, that is, a document that we need to organize logistics. They sometimes seem to hesitate about when to deploy.

A third set of issues has been the kind of issues that have been mentioned with regard to UNAMID in terms of cooperation with the Government of the Sudan, which sometimes has been there and sometimes has not. I am thinking of delays in giving visas for reconnaissance missions that need to happen, delays in providing the land for the units to deploy.

It is all of those factors that end up delaying significantly the deployment of the heavy support package. Our concern is that the repetition of such problems and then their amplification, as described in the briefing today, could seriously delay or hamper the UNAMID mission itself.

The President: I thank Mr. Guéhenno for the clarifications he has provided.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultation, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.